DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 164 003 IR 006 802

TITLE VIDEO '78: International Experience and Models.
INSTITUTION Prix Jeunesse Foundation, Munich (Germany).
PUB DATE 78
NOTE 78p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$4.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Cable Television; Developing Nations; Documentaries; *Educational Alternatives; Foreign Countries; *Media Technology; *Programing (Broadcast); Video Equipment; *Videotape Recordings; *Visual Arts
IDENTIFIERS India; Tanzania

ABSTRACT

The use of video technology as an alternative form of communications media for artists, teachers, students, and community groups in the United States, Europe, and Third World nations is described. Specific examples of video use in the various countries are outlined and individual characteristics of program organization, production, and distribution are defined for these units. The use of cable television as a means of presentation is also discussed. Much of the programming focus is an attempt to reach non-traditional audiences and document information that is often neglected by commercial networks. A bibliography of video related publications and addresses of production/coordination units are provided. (RAO)

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MUSO '78

International Supervision and Norms

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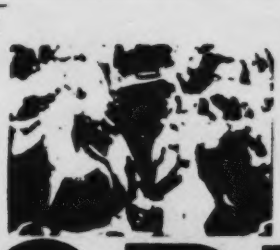

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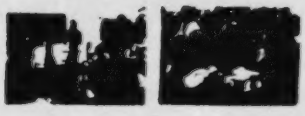

Characterizations of video:

VIDEO:

"a magic mirror"

"acupuncture of learning, broadening of experience, information, communication"

"a catalyst of social communication"

"a trigger"

"a tool"

"an electronic pencil"

"a means of analysis and self-recognition"

"a feedback instrument"

"a mass communication medium"

"our kind of television"

"Video" is associated with hope.

Most quotations, definitions, and descriptions regarding video use terms such as knowledge, freedom, communication, and change.

Video embodies a system of miniaturized television as a projection of wishes and hopes: Video is the liberation from the "information restraints and the two (and more) dimensional slavery dictated by big business TV, political leaders, and the opinion-making industry."

So is this new medium a panacea?

Video possesses a new quality.

The technological system:

A portable videoset (Portapak) consists of a small electronic camera and a portable video recorder.
For semi-professional purposes, most recordings are made on 1/2 or 3/4" video tapes with a duration of one hour or half an hour.
The television tubes used have a relatively intensive light signal. The picture can be checked directly on the monitor. The video signal itself can be manipulated. The video tape can be played back directly (live) or after the recording.
Video tapes can be cut, erased, and used again.
Whenever necessary, a portable videoset can be operated by one person alone.

This has the following implications for (television) productions:

"People quickly get used to video as a new medium. They soon forget the video camera recording their actions.

The camera can record for up to one hour without an interruption. Then, all you have to do is quickly change cassettes, and on you go.
Picture and sound recording is effected simultaneously.
Regular film cameras require a change of cassettes every 10 minutes, which obviously takes up much more time.
Film cameras cause undesired noise and the picture and sound signals have to be synchronized subsequently. Another point is that films are very expensive. People who realize that video tapes are not expensive and can be erased whenever desired, behave far more naturally in front of the camera, quite apart from the fact that they can watch themselves in the monitor.

Video enables us to conduct projects which were formerly impossible for financial reasons."

(Bernhard Dörries,
realtime video munich
Published in: Medien vor Ort. A Comparison of Video Applications.
Marl/Munich 1978)

"Video has been more interesting to me in the past two or three years, as it has now reached the same technical sophistication as the cinema, but by taking a different approach.
Let me give you an example: a magnetoscope used semi-professionally is like a small sound cassette. Nobody, not even a child or a woman who is not technically-minded, will have problems operating the buttons. It's a system we are all used to because we have seen the small cassettes before. A camera or a cutter's table, on the other hand, may even be quite frightening ..."

(Jean-Luc Godard,
Grenoble
Published in: Filmkritik 2/1977)

The advantages of video use.

Video, like manual tools, is highly versatile in its applications. Some examples of video application are

as a monitoring medium	for department store detectives, sports coaches, police, nursery attendants, plant security guards, highway guards.(Generally, this video application is only known to the user. The persons observed are not aware of the fact that video is being used.)
as an information medium	for providing information to other individuals, consumers, for promotion and advertising purposes, for school-children, students, in adult education and company training
as a communication medium	for providing mutual information among changing users, information provided by one citizen to another through local television or group discussions
as an entertainment medium	for fun and games
as an artistic medium	for the promotion of the arts

...

Despite the many technical and social advantages video is able to offer, it is not always possible to find the same solvent customers and supporters for all of these applications.

This, indeed, has become quite clear during the young history of this medium.

Jean-Luc Godard:
"I have never heard of any form of worldwide television that conducts serious studies on the population and individuals. It's the small groups that do this kind of work - and it's like things were with the first Christians. I myself am afraid of being a martyr. The problem is that you have to make money and draw an income. If you have a group of 15 people and each member wants to earn 3,000 francs a month, how much is that, 3,000 times 15. But most people don't know what to do. The work they do is not remunerated properly ..."

(Published in: Filmkritik 2/1977)

Video has its own history.

In 1968, Sony introduced the Portapak videoset in the USA. Possible applications foreseen at the time were further training in industry and public training institutions, as well as entertainment and leisure-time activities in general - in particular in connection with cable television.
This market soon turned out to be very promising and certainly offers a great potential. A sub-market - relatively small, maybe, in quantitative terms - soon developed among artists, teachers, television and film-makers, students, and social workers. This group constituted a sensitive, creative minority looking for their own means of expression and communication in the light of the Viet Nam war, the students' movement, and the increasing social problems in US cities. They wanted to be free and independent of the commercialized media pool. Even their names and publications mean a lot and have important implications: Videofreex, Raindance, Radical Software, Spaghetti City Video, Global Village, Alternate Media Center, People's Video Theatre, etc.

In addition to this very spontaneous short-lived video scene, more stable, publicly-financed media projects were able to develop in Canada and pave the way into the future. The purpose of these long-term experiments conducted by the National Film Board of Canada (under the programme title of "Challenge for Change") was to use audiovisual means as local communication media in social development processes. The best-known video projects took place at St. Jacques, Drumheller, Thunder Bay and Normandin.

These well-founded attempts at establishing video and citizen's television had a kind of signalling effect on many groups and institutions in North America, Europe, Latin America, and, more recently, Australia, where video activities are now being supported by the Australian Film Commission.

The following part of this documentation attempts, on the basis of individual, characteristic examples, to cast a light on various modes of video application. For financial reasons alone, this rundown must be confined to certain sectors and certain countries. In general, the national reports to be presented in the following are based on current interviews and visits, talks with experts, and comprehensive literature studies.

The description of video activities in West Germany and Munich is also brief and - intentionally - incomplete. For comprehensive information on this subject, the reader is referred to: Medien vor Ort e.V.: A Comparison of Video Applications. Marl/Munich 1978.

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Video in the USA

Thanks to the highly developed cable television system in the USA, video programmes made by free groups are available to a relatively large audience. Such extensive programme distribution has in fact been supported by an FCC regulation requiring cable networks in densely populated urban areas to have "public access" channels.

Television companies in the USA also show a distinct trend towards portable video systems. "Electronic news gathering" (ENG) now allows most stations to put together and edit their television news faster than hitherto. Portable video systems (generally 1 - 2") are, however, becoming increasingly popular also for other purposes, and not only for the news programmes produced by US television stations.

As mentioned, there are numerous free and semi-commercial video groups in the USA over and above the conventional television set-up. In this context reference will only be made to these video groups in cases where the activities they pursue are still different from those of European groups.

Descriptions will be provided of the following examples:

1. Studio See, South Carolina.
   A group that produces a youth series for the Public Broadcasting Service. All episodes are made exclusively with portable video systems.

2. Downtown Community Television Center, New York City.
   Although this centre also produces programmes for the Public Broadcasting Service, it concentrates on local video activities in part of southern Manhattan.

3. Alternate Media Center, New York City.
   Originally a local venture, this centre now initiates

and coordinates the activities of video groups throughout the USA. It also has close relations with the public access channels within cable systems.

Video activities at school and university also play a significant part in the USA. The highlights in this context are media education, social learning, documentation and communication. Quite a few libraries are also very well equipped with video technology.

Studio See

Since the beginning of the 1976/77 programme season, the US Public Broadcasting stations have had their own programme for 10 to 15-year-olds. The series, called "Studio See", is produced by South Carolina Educational Television (SC ETN).
The special feature of Studio See is that the whole programme is shot on location, using video instead of film. 26 half-hour episodes are broadcast once a week during the first half of the year and repeated in the second half.

video on tv

Approach and technology:

The 17-man Studio See production team consists of the producer and three 4-man production crews. Each crew consists of a camera-man, a sound engineer, a project producer, and the director. All team members are 30 or younger. Since all episodes are recorded exclusively with portable videosets, the equipment used must be light and mobile.
The camera, the 3/4" recorder, the cassettes, numerous batteries, microphones, cables, etc. are transported in up to 25 aluminium cases. The production crew usually travels

by plane and rents a mini-bus at the nearest airport to go to the desired location. The original cassettes are only used once, i.e. all the material recorded is preserved and not erased for new productions. After the crew has finished its work on location, the 3/4" cassettes are played back on to 2" tapes at SC ETN. To guarantee full broadcasting quality, the electronic signals then go through a time base corrector. Next, the tape is cut by computer using a time code. This system is the same as the technology applied for Electronic News Gathering. To obtain material in line with broadcasting standards, the subsequent production and editing work must be done at a studio. The portable cameras and recorders used by the Studio See team correspond with the equipment used by free video groups. However, to comply with the high standards of television broadcasting, they are carefully serviced and not made available to amateurs.

Why video?

A comparison of costs shows that the initial investment for video equipment is considerably larger. While a simple range of equipment with a film camera and a cutting table would only have cost ₰ 15,000.- for Studio See, the high-quality, professional video equipment now used cost ₰ 60,000.-. On the other hand, however, the current operating expenditure - e.g. for tapes - is far lower with the video technology. An important item that can be dispensed with here, for instance, is the developing and copying of film. Since, in working with young people, the ratio between production footage and broadcast material is 15:1 in the case of Studio See, this argument becomes all the more important. Another advantage is that young people working with video can see immediately the shots they have made - which often facilitates their work.

A further advantage, faster production, editing, and handling of programme contributions, is not so significant here in the case of a serial production, while the technical advantages offered by a video system do play an important role. Since the cameras do not require bright light, illumination and lighting specialists can often be dispensed with. This, in turn, increases the mobility of the film team. Young people do not take long until they behave quite naturally without paying any particular attention to the camera.

The Studio See team was even able to convince sceptical observers who had expected a lower quality standard as a result of the portable video technology. In terms of picture quality, the viewer will not notice any difference whatsoever between a Studio See episode and a programme produced with electronic studio cameras.

Contents

Studio See is a magazine-type programme. Questions are asked at the beginning of each episode, and are then answered in the individual programme contributions. Most of the reports present young people who have a special hobby, who live at an unusual or special place, who have a special job, etc. while such a young person explains what he does, the audience at home see him exercising his job on the spot. The sequence of events in each episode is intentionally fast, as the programmes have to compete with commercial broadcasts. The Studio See team, in making this series, wants to support young people in their self-confidence and encourage them to take up their own initiative.

Downtown Community Television Center

The Downtown Community Television Center (DCTV) was established in the Lower East Side of Manhattan, in the Chinatown quarter of New York, in 1971. Most of the people who live in this

part of town are immigrants, particularly Chinese and Puerto Ricans who hardly speak English. Residential housing and health care present particular problems in this area, especially with the increasing number of young drug addicts.

Under the motto of "Television by the People - Television for the People" DCTV has been endeavouring to improve the local situation in these areas by using the video technology. Using such equipment in groups and examining specific subjects is also intended to improve communication between residents and encourage them to take up their own activities.

COMMUNITY TV

"Television for the People"

DCTV offers a comprehensive range of services: It is the first organisation of its kind in the whole of New York to produce video tapes in Chinese and Spanish. Particular emphasis has always been given to local news programmes, while at the same time DCTV covers cultural events in this part of town, last but not least in order to promote the general level of understanding between the individual ethnical groups. There are also information and counselling programmes, particularly on social and health matters.

Although DCTV productions are also broadcast by the Public Broadcasting System (PBS), the Center reaches its target audience by using a Mobile Unit consisting of a mini-bus with complete video equipment, large television monitors, and loudspeakers. This unit is to encourage residents of Chinatown to participate in the programmes, particularly as

a) they do not speak English and cannot use the regular programme offering,

b) they want to be informed on local events, and

c) they cannot afford their own television set.

Particularly during the summer months, DCTV's mobile unit constantly tours the local streets along a regular route. After the programmes have been screened, the viewers are asked for a comment in their mother tongue. These interviews, as well as the spontaneous discussions they often provoke, are then recorded and are often included in new programmes. Another function of the mobile unit is to present video equipment to people living in Chinatown, thus giving them an incentive to participate in DCTV's studio workshops. Finally, the tapes are played at schools, hospitals, parks, new-construction and reconstruction areas, and in churches.

"Television by the People"

In organising workshops in which local residents can participate free of charge, the Center attempts to make as many people as possible acquainted with the video system and to show them how the medium can be used for various purposes. The courses - given by permanent DCTV employees - include interview training as well as intensive practical training. The objective is to train workshop participants to a level enabling them to make their own video programmes later on. Several thousand participants not only from Chinatown, but also from other parts of New York, have already gone through this training course. Youth participation is particularly high, although not all the young people who take part are school-children and students.

All of DCTV's facilities including its cameras and tapes are available free of charge: The initiators of the Center feel that video training will only be worthwhile if access to the equipment is free and unrestricted. The number of programmes made by workshop participants is correspondingly high. Most of the PBS productions, however, come from permanent DCTV employees.

DCTV's most important funding organisations are the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, Parks and Recreation, and the New York State Council on the Arts.

Alternate Media Centre

The Alternate Media Centre (AMC) has been in existence since 1971. It was initiated by a project conducted at the New York School of Arts, where students were able to use a 1/2" videoset as they deemed fit. The experience gained in this venture shows that students would like to make a productive contribution from their university environment - they would like to provide an input, in particular for the immediate neighbourhood. Video, they felt, would serve them as a valuable communication instrument in the process.

The project first became reality in a reconstruction area in the north of New York with a large number of immigrants from Puerto Rico. As the basis of its activities, the AMC demanded full neutrality and a down-to-earth approach without exaggerated expertise.

Unlike the Downtown Community Television Center, the AMC does not have a mobile unit. Instead, it has opened a Public Access Center at a suitable location conveniently situated in the area covered, where tapes and cameras are lent to interested parties and finished products are presented. An important point is that even at this early stage, the AMC did not produce many programmes of its own. Rather, priority was given to offering local residents video training.

In recent years, the AMC has given up making productions of its own almost completely. As the FCC requires cable

television companies to establish public access channels within their systems, completely new perspectives have opened up for video application. The AMC thus concentrates even more than before on producer training and the development of a suitable infrastructure (workshops, studios).

This phase of AMC's development is also characterized by a greater emphasis on theoretical questions and the appearance of numerous publications.

Initiated by the AMC, two groups in New York have continued the practical work carried out by the Centre in its early days: Their names are Village Neighborhood TV and Video Access Center. Again following the model established by the AMC, further Access Centers have been set up in Reading (Pennsylvania), Bakersfield (California), Orlando (Florida), and DeKalb-Scymore (Illinois), etc. In most cases, these stations also have access to the existing cable networks.

The AMC's most important funding organisation is a private foundation, the Markel Foundation. In the initial phase of its activities, it also received financial support from the New York State Council on the Arts. The aim was to take the AMC as an example in order to study the effects of feeding video programmes into cable systems.

UNITED KINGDOM

Video in the United Kingdom serves a twofold purpose: To make the local programmes broadcast by cable television stations, and to provide many groups with an ideal facility for improving the flow of communication and information between citizens and the local administration.

Since the late 60's, video equipment has been used time and again in community work. It was also at this time that two important political events took place on a community level: The Town and Country Planning Act passed in 1968 and the Skeffington Report. Both of these documents required greater citizen participation in community planning and decision-making projects.

It was soon found that video could provide this communication, and video systems have indeed been used to an increasing extent since then, both by the authorities and the administration, and by individual citizens. Video has thus evolved into a carrier of information and a decision-making aid.

1. The use of video during a city reconstruction project in Hammersmith

Contrary to other projects, the initiative in the Hammersmith (a Borough of London) project came from the municipal administration, which, in October 1974, had appointed a Video Officer and purchased the necessary equipment.

The first step in carrying out theproject was to split up the Borough of Hammersmith into 13 areas where a public meeting was held on different days. The highlight in each meeting was a 20-minute video tape demonstrating the Council's problems in developing a suitable reorganisation and reconstruction plan. The tape itself had

been produced by the planning department in cooperation with the Council's Video Officer.

After the screening, the participants in each meeting split up to form small discussion groups. Their task was to discuss the video tape and to decide which of the problems presented (traffic and transport, housing, shopping, etc.) should be given top priority and solved at the earliest possible date.

Following the group discussions and the reports provided thereon in the ensuing plenary session, the participants were offered the chance to produce a video tape under the same conditions as that produced by the Council. The tape was to present those problems the working groups regarded as particularly important.

Video in City Planning

This offer was accepted. The video committee thus established consisted of representatives of all social classes and areas in the district concerned.

As these meetings were held in all parts of Hammersmith, a total of 12 video committees was finally established. With the help of the Video Officer, these committees produced 12 roughly 20-minute-long video tapes within just a few weeks. The tapes produced by the video committees were then, in turn, screened at the next district meeting. Two additional meetings were arranged to allow residents in one district to gain an idea of the problems their neighbours currently had and to look at the tapes made by the other video groups.
The 12 video tapes and all the written material (minutes, manuscripts, etc.) compiled at the individual meetings of the video committees were then handed over to the Planning

Department for further analysis. As a result, the public and their desires were included in the final reorganisation and reconstruction plan submitted for the Borough of Hammersmith.

Owing to budget problems, this project was the first and the last of its kind in Hammersmith. Since then, video has only been used for internal purposes within the administration.

2. District activities at the Community Action Centre

The Community Action Centre in the north of London comprises a video group founded in the spring of 1975. The group consists of three individuals whose work if financed by funds provided by the Greater London Arts Association, the Kensington/Chelsea Arts Association, and the Manpower Services Commission.

Since these funds were not sufficient to cover the entire cost of the video projects and to provide the three video team members with a suitable income, the members are obliged to earn extra money by accepting part-time jobs. Most of these jobs are within youth and old-age welfare programmes which means that the group is well acquainted with the problems prevailing in the area where they carried out their video projects.

[redacted]he group projects was conducted at Peplar House, [redacted]y 10-year-old residential area in the north of London which is due for reconstruction and reorganisation. After having seen a video tape demonstration about another part of town, a tenant living in this area had the idea to interview Peplar House residents and ask them about their specific situation. Together with the video group, he produced a tape in the course of just one afternoon and showed it at a meeting.

The tape triggered a heated debate. The residents decided to establish their own organisation to represent their interests more effectively against the local residential authorities.

After the first meeting, the tape was supplemented by additional interviews and pictures showing the inadequate residential situation in the area, and was then shown to the residents again on a Sunday afternoon. This was again recorded on tape and added to the existing material. The tape, thus supplemented further, was then screened and discussed again at a second meeting of the residents' association.

This tape is a remarkable document on the problems of the residents of Peplar House. It even succeeded in creating a new feeling of togetherness among the residents.

Since February 1977, the video group has been working on a Photographic and Video Newsservice project (local news). The district they have chosen is Kensal New Town, a new residential area in North Kensington which "excels" by the absolute anonymity of the living conditions it offers.

The objective of the Community Action Centre's project is to establish a regular local news service. The news provided is supposed to cover current events and meetings, etc. in the district. The group hopes that in this way residents will be able to establish better contacts. The crucial point is therefore in how far the various media are able to create a community spirit and identity within a limited area.

The first phase of the project was to rent two rooms in Kensal New Town. The next step was to take photographs and produce video tapes on the living conditions and

activities of people living in the area. Residents were interviewed, and clubs for the old, parents' associations, and adult education classes were asked for their opinions.

At a subsequent exhibition, the material compiled was shown to residents and the local news project was explained in all of its details. The next step was to procure contributions for News at West 10: This job was taken over primarily by 10 young people who had just left school, 8 of whom were paid by the Manpower Services Commission within the job creation programme.

Owing to the novel character of the project, production of the first 15-minute news programme (a report on child-care, financial cutbacks in the social services area, various announcements, and other short reports) proved to be relatively difficult and took three weeks in all.

News at West 10, edition 1, was shown to various groups several times at the local Health Centre. The tape was also presented outdoors near a shopping centre. In each case, the screening was supplemented by an exhibition of photographs. Although many people attended the sessions, the direct feedback was relatively meagre.

Edition 2 of this local news programme (dealing once again with the cutback of social benefits, public libraries, a local football match for welfare purposes, the dismissal of two group leaders responsible for the Kensington/Chelsea players' coach, and brief information items) met with a greater response. This time, the contributions were interlinked by a presenter and certain groups were addressed directly by way of the video tape technique.

The screenings of the 20-minute tape near the shopping centre and in the local market street turned out to be

another failure. Although quite a few residents looked at the photographs and watched the individual video contributions, hardly any of them stayed for the entire news programme.

The conclusion drawn in respect of edition 3 was to have all the video tape screenings in front of a limited audience. The decision was made to use a different tape version with shorter contributions, an attractive musical background, and a commentary for future outdoor screenings.

Although News at West 10 is still in the development phase, certain effects have already become evident: Contacts between the various organisations and groups in the district, and between the video group and the population, are beginning to become closer and more intensive. Today, more residents of Kensal New Town have better information on their district than was the case before the project was started.

CATV

The Channel 40 cable television project at Milton Keynes

Milton Keynes, a new town some 50 miles north of London, was planned in 1967 with the primary objective of offering the population of Greater London new residential and working areas. Today, Milton Keynes has roughly 30,000 inhabitants and by 1991, when the town is completed, the population is to go up to more than 250,000. The town consists mainly of low buildings constructed over a large area. As an extensive road network had to be built, too, the General Post Office installed a television cable system for 10,000 households at the same time.

This television cable system made it possible to provide a local Milton Keynes television programme in addition to

the existing channels. In 1976, therefore, the Home Office granted a broadcasting licence to the Channel 40 cable station, limited for the time being to a period of three years. Channel 40 is not a commercial enterprise and does not receive any private support. Rather, it is funded by the Milton Keynes Development Corporation (the responsible planning organisation for the new town, in particular for social matters) and by the General Post Office. Michael Barrett, the station manager, and 6 staff members (engineers, "producers", secretary)form the permanent staff of Channel 40.

CO-AX Cable Communications Ltd, an independent company, was then established by the Milton Keynes residents as the organisation's licensee. Both the station manager and his staff members report to this company.

The Channel 40 team summarizes its responsibilities in an information sheet for the residents of Milton Keynes as follows:

> "The intention of Channel 40 is to help residents in producing their own local programme. When they have something to say, they simply come to the studio and say it. When they have something to show, they can learn from us how to use portable video cameras and then make a video tape themselves. All this is free of charge. Whenever you want to organize a contest, a concert or a discussion evening - we can be there with the studio cameras. If you want to help us as camera-man or presenter, just call us or drop in."

The station's most important objective is to give the residents of Milton Keynes the possibility of expressing themselves via video, and to offer them information on the cable system. In brief: the communication offering is

to be improved substantially.

Various groups, organisations, and individuals have direct access to the production process. Without any bureaucratic complications, they simply borrow video-sets, develop their programme concepts, and determine the course of production. However, they may also, if desired, request the help of the Channel 40 staff. If somebody does not want to produce a video tape himself, he may also pass on his idea to the station's permanent staff who will then produce the tape for him.

The active programme producers include social workers, educators, clergymen, politicians, and individuals who have recognized television as a "means of creative expression" (M. Barrett). In the opinion of the Channel 40 staff, the advantage of video is its easy handling even by inexperienced users. The user does not have to operate any complicated technical apparatus. Production processes such as cutting and developing films are not necessary. The objective of the station is not to produce professional programmes designed for high viewing rates, but rather to allow the local residents to show everyday life in their own town. Sensations, absolute novelty, and technical brilliance are regarded as criteria crucial only to commercial television.

Channel 40 programmes can be received without payment of an extra licence fee by every television set connected to the cable network. 40 is the number of the channel.

The Channel 40 programmes are broadcast in black and white. Colour broadcasts would require a more sophisticated technical system. The station's technical equipment comprises in particular 6 portable 1/2" video recorders with cameras lent out to residents, the studio with three black

and white cameras, the programme direction room with two 3/4" recorders, monitors, film scanners, etc. A broadcasting van for outdoor programmes is also available.

The programmes are made up in a magazine-type format. The individual programme contributions are not limited in their duration. In most cases, the programme "producers" can also determine the date on which their programmes are to be broadcast. Viewers are informed of when the programmes are scheduled to begin both by the local press and by announcements faded into Channel 40. As there are no definite broadcasting hours each week for particular programmes, the duration and starting times of the programmes are fixed anew in each case. Total programming per week amounts to at least five hours. Each programme block is repeated once.

From July to September 1977, the total output of Channel 40 was 30 programmes (60 with repeats) comprising 188 individual programme items lasting for a total of 60 hours. Five live programmes were also produced in the course of this period (discussions on further development of the town). Viewers watching these programmes were able to participate directly via telephone.

In all, 434 video tapes were recorded from July until September 1977: 262 were 1/2", and 172 were 3/4" (studio productions). Of the 1/2" tapes, 145 were produced by residents.

Although the research accompanying this project has not yet provided any accurate figures on viewers' participation, one may assume (with a due reserve) that approximately 17 per cent of the households linked up to the cable system regularly watch the Channel 40 programmes. This percentage is far higher than anticipated. Assuming that 10,000 households are connected to the system and that two to three viewers usually sit in front of the television set, the regular viewing rate is 3,500 to 5,000 persons a week.

NETHERLANDS

Application of video in local cable television experiments

In 1971 an act was passed in the Netherlands providing the legal basis for local cable television experiments over a limited period. As a result, 6 local cable television stations were established in 1974 and early 1975 at Goirle, Deventer, Dronten, Melick-Herkenbosch, Zoetermeer, and Amsterdam-Bijlmermeer. All of these stations use a semi-professional video technology amateurs are able to handle without problems. From the very beginning, commercial film and video producers were not allowed to participate in these cable stations - since the objective was to create public involvement in planning, producing, and discussing local programmes. The objective of these experiments was to promote social integration within the communities (usually anonymous residential areas, satellite towns, parts of town populated mainly by foreigners), to support and further cultural life, and to develop the basis for media decisions thanks to accompanying scientific research.

Media Centres

Kijkhuis (The Hague)

Kijkhuis was established 2 1/2 years ago. The initial idea was to present films to people living in and around The Hague, which had no chance of being shown at commercial cinemas, thus creating a forum for the "alternative cinema". A sponsor was found to support the idea and he placed a three-storey house at the disposal of the initiative group, charging them a symbolic rent of 1 guilder/year.

Kijkhuis is opened daily (except Monday) from 12.00 noon to 1.00 am. The videotheque is open until 10.00 pm. The communication centre, which is established as an independent organisation, employees a permanent staff of five. In addition, there are 10 voluntary contributors who work at the centre one or two days a week.

Video tapes are screened free of charge. On the basis of a catalogue, interested persons can currently choose between 120 tapes out of a constantly growing videotheque. A point worth noting, however, is that 80 per cent of these tapes are merely recordings of particular television programmes, while only 20 per cent are free video productions.

Kijkhuis also houses a café, screening rooms for video tapes (20 seats) and films (60 seats), and two mini-studios.

In addition to the regular film screenings, Kijkhuis also organizes a week of discussions on selected subjects every two months. Examples: homosexuality, people living at old-age homes, problems of foreigners, etc. Within the framework of these activities, larger groups are given the possibility of renting the production room (video tape cutting equipment) at 10 guilders/hour.

Once a month, Kijkhuis publishes a periodical financed from its own funds (circulation: 500 copies).

The staff regard their contacts with other groups as very good. There is no competition or rivalry. Rather, the individual groups and organisations are eager to exchange their experience and know-how. Kijkhuis nevertheless regards itself primarily as a screening centre - which means that both sides require and profit from their mutual contacts, particularly contacts with active video groups.

Kijkhuis has received a non-recurring grant of 100,000 guilders from the Komitee Sommercircus (a cultural fund that draws its money from the surcharge put on special postage stamps). Together with the Meatball video group residing in the same house, Kijkhuis has also taken up a loan which has already been repaid. Current expenditure and equipment maintenance are financed by the income produced by the café, the "kijkschrift" periodical, and equipment rental.

The R K S Video Centre

Rotterdamse Kunststichting (RKS) is an organisation that concentrates primarily on cultural activities in Rotterdam. One of the highlights in its programme is constituted by local promotion campaigns.

In its community video-work, RKS appeals directly to citizens, encouraging them to participate in the decisions taken in their environment, giving them an opportunity to raise criticism, and to actively support their rights. As RKS states in one of its information brochures, "video is an excellent means for achieving this objective". "The best way of demonstrating the problems prevailing in a certain part of town and the various views expressed thereon is to make a video tape. Activities can be described, citizens can be activated to express their opinions, and the responsible people can be convinced."

RKS thus operates its own video centre - and the first "local video picture-books" were produced in 1975. Its activities in the field of video art date back five years and local activities have been pursued since the summer of 1976. Citizen groups or local organisations interested in these activities are able to borrow video equipment from the video centre, thus making their tapes either themselves or with the support of a video specialist. Whenever necessary, a team provided directly by the centre can also take over the production work.

In such a case the expenditure incurred by the "Wijkorgaan", ie the local representatives, must be returned to the centre. These Wijkorgaans are financed by the City of Rotterdam. The financial situation of the centre is, in fact, very good indeed: While the staff receive their salary from the City, RKS provides the remaining funds from its own sources. The reason for this very ample supply of community funds is the 200,000 guilder subsidy paid to the City and provided for the "emancipatie arbeid" by the Dutch Ministry of Education.

Conceived originally as a two-year experiment, the video centre is to be established on a permanent community basis as of June. The plan is to hire three new staff members in order to provide video training courses for local residents, and to expand the equipment-lending system. A department of video art and a department of video education are also to be added to the current activities.

Open Studio (Amsterdam)

The Open Studio is an audio-visual working group established in 1972. Its purpose is to provide its means and know-how to citizens concerned with communication, information, and education.
Up to December 1976, the Open Studio did not receive any financial support and was thus only able to afford a minimum standard of equipment: two portable Akai video-sets and the essential light and sound equipment.

In January 1977, the State Lottery provided a non-recurring grant of 100,000 guilders and the City of Amsterdam a grant of 10,000 guilders. This enabled the Open Studio to raise the standard of its existing equipment up to that of a semi-professional studio.

The activities of the Open Studio:

- The studio handles customer orders against payment of a suitable fee.
- Staff members visit action groups and offer their co-operation.
- Equipment is hired out on a rental basis.
- Citizens' initiatives whose socio-political objectives are in line with those of the Open Studio, are supported free of charge.

Currently, the Open Studio has a staff of 10 - 14 voluntary, unpaid contributors. As, thanks to the grants provided by the City, the Open Studio has now become a kind of public institution, it can also employ practical trainees from the universities in Amsterdam (these trainees also receive scholarships).
Among the team's output so far, there have also been productions on immigrants' ghettos and women's problems.

FRANCE

In France, video activities are conducted on two different levels. We must distinguish between (1) experiments initiated and supported by the state, and (2) the work done by free video groups.

1. Video activities initiated by the state

The first practical video experiments have been conducted since 1971/72 within the setting of cultural programmes initiated by the state. Some initial video projects have thus been carried out either by state ministries directly or by their associated organisations. These video activities form part of a social and cultural policy conducted under the heading of "socio-cultural animation". In principle, this is a special form of social intervention lying within the existing leisure-time and social education programmes. Video application, therefore, is just one aspect involved in this overall activity. The purpose of "video animation" is to establish contacts between residents in the area where they live, to help them recognize their local problems, to present and reflect these problems, and to develop possible solutions.

vidéo-animation

"Video Animation" performs more than just an observing function: It is also an integrated part of various social processes. The crucial point, therefore, is the production process, and not the finished video tape in its aesthetic perfection.

Three fields of implementation must be distinguished here:

1) Individual projects running for a certain period only
   Usually, these are video animation experiments conducted by teams of animators in several regions for a few days

only. These were, indeed, the very first experiments in video application.

2) Experiments with mobile video studios
Video buses are used to guarantee programme continuity over and above the individual experiments. These buses also offer the advantages of having complete technical equipment. Five video buses are currently in use.

3) Application of video for preparing a local system of cable television
"Vidéogazette de Grenoble" is the only attempt made so far in France at instituting a local cable television programme made by citizens using video equipment. However, this experiment was discontinued in 1976. (For a comprehensive description of the experiment, cf. Jean-Pierre Dubois-Dumée, La télévision par cable en France, les expériences de vidéo-animation, Conseil de l'Europe, 1973.)

These activities are conducted mainly by cultural education organisations, such as the "Centre National pour l'Animation Audiovisuelle" (CNAAV), the "Centre de Recherche pour l'Education permanente et l'Action Culturelle" (CREPAC), and "Education et Vie Sociale". Video is currently being used to a greater extent within local media and cultural centres. An example of such a multi-media centre is the "Centre de Ressources Audio-Visuelles de la Ville Nouvelle de St. Quentin en Yvelines" (CRAV).

<u>CRAV</u>

CRAV is a department of the St. Quentin en Yvelines community centre ("Maison Pour Tous"). It is administrated and funded by the municipal cultural authority. The 1977 annual budget was approximately 600,000 francs. CRAV is located in the "Maison Pour Tous" in the pedestrians'

precinct and main shopping street of Elancourt, a part of St. Quentin en Yvelines. The centre does not only offer video facilities, but also provides super-8 and photographic equipment. Among other things, it has a photo laboratory, a film-cutting room, a small television studio, a video studio, and a screening room. CRAV also has 6 portable videosets which interested parties can borrow, as well as a mobile video-unit (a converted bus). The objective of CRAV is to provide its audio-visual resources to interested citizens, thus guaranteeing better cooperation between the local cultural and education institutions, such as schools, libraries, youth houses, clubs for the old, etc. The four main functions of the centre are as follows:

1) Documentation
   All of the centre's productions are archived at the "Médiathèque".

2) Production
   Each project proposed from the outside is studied by a team of animators. The most suitable medium for realizing the project is then selected in cooperation with the users, who are then responsible for the practical execution of the project. The so-called animators only have an advisory function.

3) Screening
   CRAV lends out playback equipment and organises production screenings in the centre's screening rooms.

4) Training
   CRAV conducts free-of-charge training courses for all parties interested in the use of audio-visual equipment.

Media education

The "Secrétariat d'Etat à la Jeunesse et aux Sports" concentrates primarily on the application of video in youth activities. This "Youth and Sport Secretariat" uses video as an instrument within its media-orientated training courses, the objective being not only to learn audio-visual technologies, but also to improve the participants' capacity of social communication. In using and dealing with the video technology, young people are to be made acquainted with mass media products and their production process. In addition to running one mobile video unit in Paris and Nice, respectively, the Youth and Sport Secretariat also conducts another interesting video project:

"Vidéo Promotion Jeunesse" (VPJ)

VPJ is an attempt to introduce a new media education concept in youth work on a practical level: Contary to the rather ad hoc, sporadic activities of the mobile video units, the objective here is to create a continuous media education programme with and for young people. Video is therefore to be used as a creative instrument by introducing and applying a new technology and a new means of expression.
VPJ is administrated and run by the "Association Education et Vie Sociale" and the "Institut National d'Education Populaire" (INEP), which has also provided the rooms in which VPJ operates. The "Vidéo Promotion Jeunesse" team consists of a project manager, an animator, and a secretary, as well as five further part-time animators.

VPJ offers self-organized youth groups the possibility of conducting their own video projects, provided these groups fulfil the following conditions:

- The group must consist of young workers, school-children, or students (minimum age 16 years) and must be self-organized.
- The group must develop its own video project and apply for the due execution thereof by presenting a specific

subject from the field of social education or culture. These project proposals, once they have been developed, are submitted to a programme committee for their approval. The committee is made up of representatives of the organisations sponsoring the project and of VPJ members. It meets roughly 9 times a year to take decisions on the video project applications made. Once a project has been accepted, the next step is to organize a three-day video training course for the project group. For this purpose, the individual group members are invited to INEP. The objective of the course is to make the group sufficiently acquainted with the video technology, thus enabling them to use and handle the equipment properly when carrying out the project. Another objective is to give the group members an initial impression of the specific nature of video and its applications. Once this phase is over, the group is provided with a portable videoset and five new video tapes for a period of three to four weeks. After it has then produced and made its own tapes in its own responsibility, it meets at INEP once again for four days in order to cut and edit the tape. Finally, the group receives a copy of the tape containing its production.

With the help of "Vidéo Promotion Jeunesse" 68 productions were made according to this procedure between January 1,1975 and December 31, 1976: documentaries and reports on young people's leisure-time, training, and labour problems. The groups always endeavoured, in their productions, to make it clear to their social environment that they consisted of young people themselves. The educative effect of these projects is thus pre-determined, as it were. The experience involved in forming and organizing a group, the challenge of dealing with technology, and the effort to convey a message by video - all this requires a lot of perseverance and definitely constitutes an important learning factor for a youth group conducting such a project independently for the first time ever.

Apart from supporting video productions, the team of the "Vidéo Promotion Jeunesse" also supports the "Vidéotheque Nationale Socio-Educative de l'Institut National d'Education Populaire" founded on December 31, 1976. The purpose of this videotheque is to archive all the video tapes produced with the assistance of VPJ. Currently, these archives comprise some 120 titles. On the basis of a comprehensive catalogue, groups interested in these titles can have copies of the tapes made. To do this, they only have to send in a corresponding number of unused tapes and pay a copying charge of 30 francs/copy. "Vidéo Promotion Jeunesse" also helps groups that do not have any playback equipment, facilities, and rooms in organizing their screening sessions. In 1976, the annual cost of the project thus amounted to a total of 383,921 francs. Converting this to the number of productions, one obtains an average price of 7,680 francs for each video tape produced. By comparison, a 16-mm film production lasting between 15 and 20 minutes will cost at least 40,000 francs.

The 1977 budget of "Vidéo Promotion Jeunesse" amounting to 250,000 francs is financed by grants provided by the Youth and Sport Secretariat, INEP, E.V.S., and the Ministry of Agriculture.

2. "Free video groups" and their activities

In addition to the organisations already mentioned, there are about 20 independent video groups in France, mainly in and around Paris. The activities of these groups date back to the "Cinéma militant" movement and are closely connected with the demand for alternative media work (intended to overcome the mass media monopoly), which has become greater and greater since May 1968. The objective of these opposition groups, therefore, is to create a counterbalance vis-a-vis the mass media. Following this policy,

they provide information on subjects and events which would otherwise not receive broad public coverage: They intentionally take up taboo subjects and attempt to pursue a kind of counter-reporting policy as opposed to television in cases of social conflict (strikes, demonstrations, etc). An example of this activity is the documentary on the labour struggle at the LIP clock factory, which was produced by the "Vidéo Out" group in Paris and comprises some 80 hours of taped material. Other subjects made available to the public at large for the first time by this group are abortions, problems of homosexuals, women's emancipation, problems of foreigners, etc. In these instances, the use of video becomes a political, an agitatory activity. Although the free video groups are usually not very well off financially, most of them now tend to do without any state support or subsidies, as some of them had some rather bad experiences when, at the beginning of the video movement, the state attempted to intervene and control video activities. As a result, the groups now try to organize and finance the production and distribution of their video tapes themselves, hoping in this way to remain unobstructed and free of formal and content restrictions.

BELGIUM

Video activities in the French-speaking part of Belgium date back to the early 70's and have been supported by free video groups which, following the "Cinéma militant" movement and the first reports on video activities in the USA, initiated their own emancipative video work. Their common objective was to open up the audio-visual media for all and to pave the way, by way of suitable preparatory work, for local and community cable television projects.

In November 1973, the majority of the Belgian groups operating in the field of educational and community video activities joined forces to form "Vidéoption", a common, public-orientated organisation with the objective of propagating and promoting video activities by providing increased information, technical training courses, production aid for community video groups, and a tape exchange programme between the groups themselves. Experiments were conducted with an equipment pool to which all the groups contributed, and additional equipment was bought with group funds and individual donations made by the Ministry of Education. The activities of the groups in this pioneering phase may be described roughly as follows: Video is used as a kind of mirror in group analyses (borderline groups, social problem groups) or as a means of intervention in acute conflict situations (strikes, demonstrations); video is used as a medium for documenting the local environment, for town and community portraits, and the presentation of local problems; finally, video tapes serve as a basis of discussions in stimulating social activities and campaigns.

As a result of ideological and political differences between the groups and a general phase of disappointment due to the over-optimistic expectations put into the video medium and its ability to effect changes, "Vidéoption" was disbanded in March 1975.

The first institutes to examine media applications were universities and communication research institutes. While most of their studies were theoretical, they also carried out practical tests from case to case. Culture and youth clubs, for example, expanded their film clubs to form video clubs and procured a first set of video equipment. RTB, the Belgian Broadcasting Service, promoted video awareness by various information campaigns and experiments. The Ministry of French Culture (Ministère de la Culture Francaise) also included video in its cultural and media activities. Like in France, video is now also to be used within socio-cultural animation projects in the French-speaking part of Belgium.

Video in community television

As of 1974/75, video activities entered into a consolidation phase particularly on an institutional level, but also within some of the free groups. Infrastructural improvements were introduced to an increasing extent by various state authorities, ie, videosets and video equipment were provided and individual groups, in particular groups operating in youth and culture centres, were granted financial support. Video activities have now gained particular significance within community television ("télévision communautaire"): 12 local cable television experiments have so far been approved by the Ministry of Education. The citizens' groups participating in these community television experiments all operate with 1/2" videosets funded by the Ministry through a 50 % grant. These groups produce local video programmes then broadcast through the cable network. So far, however, only four groups have introduced a regular cable programme, while the other groups are still negotiating their broadcasting contracts with the local authorities and cable network companies. They thus still screen their video tapes at community centres, in town squares, in public buildings, and schools.

Apart from the Ministry of French Culture, particular video support is provided by the "Commission francaise de la Culture de l'Agglomeration de Bruxelles" (CFC) within the framework of its cultural activities. CFC is a regional organisation responsible for promoting cultural activities in the greater Brussels area. In cooperation with the "Médiathèque de Belgique" it organizes a special video bus service.

The Médiathèque de Belgique video bus

Within its programme for the promotion of audiovisual media, CFC decided in 1975 to introduce a video bus service.

The programme organizers regard video as an instrument of cultural activities, and not just as a kind of "magical medium". CFC, a public organisation, therefore has the task to make this new medium available to all interested parties - ie also users who do not have the necessary funds to buy their own equipment. The objective is to make video a truly democratic instrument, thus enriching communication and the possibilities individuals and groups have of expressing themselves. With this policy in mind, a decision was taken to create a kind of "public service" - a video bus available to all cultural and educational organisations.

In cooperation with the "Médiathèque de Belgique", a mini-transporter was then converted into a video bus and equipped with a complete video studio. Although the bus belongs to CFC, "Médiathèque" is responsible for all technical and organisational requirements. The advantage of such a mobile video unit is that it is able to concentrate the necessary technical facilities within a small area, while still being available for decentralized missions. The video bus crew is made up of three Médiathèque animators, whose activity, however, is purely an advisory one: They provide video technology training, offer assistance and help in video

production, and do not intervene in the production contents themselves.

The objectives of the video bus service:

The principal objective of this service is to provide users with a new video facility. The video bus is also designed for promoting animation and education activities, particularly by providing access to underprivileged classes of the population unable to use other means of expression and mass media. The simultaneous establishment of videotheques is moreover intended to create an exchange network for the individual video organisations. Last but not least, the video bus is also intended as a pacemaker for community television.

In terms of its objective, the video bus is an experiment both for its inventors and for its users. Indeed, the use of a bus queries certain pre-conditions applied quite generally so far, such as the concept of pluralism or the objectiveness only "large-scale television" has been able to provide in the past. These terms and concepts must thus be re-formulated by the specific experience and know-how provided by video work.

The video bus is at the exclusive disposal of organized socio-cultural groups in the greater Brussels area, which already have a certain amount of experience in this kind of work. Preferably, it is lent out to groups that already have some initial training in video technology. Users who want to operate with the bus must send an application to the "Comité de Programmation", describing therein the exact objectives and contents of their project. The "Comité de Programmation" is made up of CFC and "Médiathèque" representatives, as well as an expert from the Ministry of French Culture. It takes all the relevant decisions on how and where the video bus is to be used. After conclusion of a project, a copy of the tape produced is retained for the videotheque, a further copy being

given to the production group free of charge.

After the first 20 months of experience, the following summary can be drawn from these video bus operations:

> Out of 58 groups that requested usage of the video bus, no less than 40 were able to produce their own tape. One-quarter of all the tapes produced dealt with the local residential situation, while other topics were unemployment, the economic crisis, and problems of foreigners.
> In addition to these group productions, the bus was also used for video training courses. Within a total of five such courses, the video bus crew was able to reach 178 individuals from 91 different institutions, including 23 youth centres.

The recent introduction of a new video bus based on the Brussels model and planned to operate in the Province of Hainaut, as effected by the Ministry of French Culture, indicates that the authorities responsible for the video bus experiment give the concept a positive perspective for the future.

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

Video activities in the Federal Republic of Germany are concentrated in the three large cities, Berlin, Hamburg, and Munich. This is where most free video groups currently operate and it is also where the video movement started out in Germany. In many cases, the initiative was taken by the universities, and particularly by the art and education departments. However, the first free video groups, operating independently of the universities, were also established in the early 70's. They followed the concept already developed by video groups in Canada and the USA.

Currently there are roughly 30 active video groups in the Federal Republic of Germany. Since, however, some of these groups are not permanent and are only formed in order to handle individual projects, the number may deviate from time to time. Not all of the groups have their own equipment.

Contrary to the situation in other European countries, state or municipal subsidies for video activities outside of educational institutions have only been available for a very short time. In 1977, for example, the Education Department of the City of Munich sponsored several local video newscasts produced by various video groups in Munich. The same Department also sponsored the study "A Comparison of Video Applications - Domestic and Foreign Experience and the Situation in Munich" (Marl/Munich 1978) compiled and conducted by "Medien vor Ort e.V.". The situation is similar in Berlin, where the local operations of "medienoperative" now receive public funding for the first time. In contrast, the three video centres established in Hamburg, "Medienladen", "Medienpädagogik Zentrum" (MPZ), and "Medienzentrum Fuhlsbüttel"(MeFu), do not receive any kind of subsidy.

Like the fourth media centre in Germany, "medienoperative berlin", the three Hamburg centres are all organized as clubs. The first of these organisations to appear were those in Hamburg, which were established between 1973 and 1975. The Berlin centre only came into existence in 1977. So far,

Munich does not have a media centre which would be able to provide the necessary cutting and screening equipment, as well as the necessary information, for the very versatile video scene in this city.

Although they concentrate on different highlights, all of these four media centres are based on the same fundamental concept. Their common wish and objective is to provide a contact and coordination point for alternative media activities. For this purpose, all of the four centres have a very active publicity programme. The most active centre in this respect is "Medienladen" in Hamburg, which publishes the regular "Video-Magazin". Within just a short period, this periodical has indeed become the most important video publication throughout the whole of Germany. Inter alia, "Video-Magazin" presents reports on video activities at home and abroad, addresses, literature, and technical information.

Out of all of these four centres, "Medienladen" regards itself most of all as a kind of service facility. It therefore provides interested local and youth groups with video equipment, organizes video courses, and uses the cutting equipment required for editing and handling tapes. This programme is supplemented by a large videotheque with model productions from at home and abroad, as well as a library and the centre's own printing shop. Although "Medienladen" charges a certain nominal fee for its services, this fee is far lower than the amount of money otherwise charged by commercial video equipment suppliers.

"Medienpädagogik Zentrum" also lends out equipment and publishes documentation ("MPZ-Materialien"). The highlight of its activities, however, is direct, practical and political work, which, as the members of MPZ emphasize, is absolutely essential to make media application genuinely effective. "Medienzentrum Fuhlsbüttel", in turn, concentrates primarily on media activities in the District of Fuhlsbüttel, a part of Hamburg.

"medienoperative" in Berlin was recently requested by the Berlin Senate to compile a video documentary on the residents' involvement programme within the Berlin-Kreuzberg reorganisation project, which is officially sponsored by the Federal Building Act. Before establishing their centre, the members of "medienoperative" had already been using video and film facilities for a number of years. "medienoperative" also lends out its equipment against payment of a fee and organizes video courses, in particular for teachers or youth workers who will be able to pass on the knowledge they acquire. Video screenings are organized on a local basis, in pubs, and at the centre itself.

"medienoperative berlin" as well as other video groups operating on a local level regret the fact that so far there has not been any long-term support of local media activities in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Video groups in Germany have cooperated with the state-owned television organisations a number of times in the past. The "Telewissen" video group from Darmstadt, for example, works regularly for "Teamwörk", a youth programme produced and broadcast by Süddeutscher Rundfunk. Sender Freies Berlin also broadcasts video programmes, such as a one-hour documentary on young Berliners without employment, which was produced and compiled by the "Video Audio Media" (VAM) group. Video productions have also been broadcast in the "Vor Ort" series of Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen.

The pilot projects now planned for testing cable television in the Federal Republic of Germany seem to justify certain hopes that communication on a local level will be intensified and promoted to a greater extent in future.

AUSTRIA

Two Austrian states, Burgenland and Steiermark, produced "local television programmes" for 5 and 8 months, respectively, in 1976/77. These programmes were produced by citizens assisted by a video group. The experiment was funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Art with a 140,000-DM subsidy, and by the State Offices of Culture and the communities. Since a cable network for distributing these local programmes was not available, the video tapes produced were screened in the street, on squares, in pubs, and at cultural centres. Although this form of presentation limited the general impact and coverage of the video programmes, the video group also saw some very positive aspects in this method of direct public screening: The audience can discuss the programmes presented with the producers on the spot. In many cases, the response of the audience to the programmes was recorded on a new video tape and then integrated in the existing production. In this way, the finished video tapes on specific subjects, which are usually edited to a length of one or half an hour, reflect a multi-stage process and attain a very high level of (information) density.

Citizens' video

The project description submitted to the Ministry of Education by the video group refers to the two media experiments in Burgenland and Steiermark expressly as "models for compiling data relevant to the establishment of local television studios". Although the two projects were very limited both financially and in terms of the staff available - in each case, only five people worked on the project -, and although, as a result, the projects cannot be regarded as local television for an entire state, they nevertheless showed how easy-to-handle video technology could be used in future for producing a citizen-orientated local and regional programme.

Equipment and videotheque

The video group used most of the subsidies it received for purchasing the necessary equipment, which, officially, remained the property of the Federal Ministry. 3/4" video cassette-sets suitable for colour productions were used in nearly all cases. Almost all of the productions, however, were black and white, as the group had decided against purchasing expensive colour cameras. The principal motive for choosing the cassette recorders was that they are far more robust than 1/2" tape recorders, while at the same time they allowed a considerable improvement in quality. One of the video cassette recorders used was portable, whereas the other two, equipped for electronic cutting, were stationary recorders.
The final product: footage ratio varied in general from 1:3 to 1:6.

How the video group worked

Animation: The first step taken by the members of the video group was to establish contacts with the residents in the areas in which they would be living during the project. As these areas were largely unknown to them, they contacted residents in pubs, in the street, at schools, in clubs and at work, by pamphlets and video programmes. In so doing, they referred to the existence of the local video studio set up as a permanent establishment for the period of the project. During this contact phase, the various subjects covered within the local video programmes became apparent: inter alia, young people, work and the employment situation, farmers and their situation, social minorities, cultural activities. The subject of young people (school, professional training, leisure-time occupations) soon turned out to be one of the most comprehensive ones.
The video group encouraged the formation of working groups comprising not only young people but also some adults. These individual groups then produced

video programmes on topics they had picked themselves. Although the video group's aim was to have citizen participation, this does not mean that the citizens had to produce everything down to the last programme detail. The important point, rather, was to arouse their interest and stimulate their participation. Whenever possible, however, the producing working groups also handled the final production phases or gave the video group instructions for finalizing the production work.
The video group also made its own productions with individuals or groups who had not contacted the video studio on their own behalf.

Selection: The programmes produced by citizens were not intended as an uncritical continuation of private holiday films made by super-8 fans. Rather, the objective was to present "all areas of social, cultural, political, and societal relevance which, through their presentation, have a further-reaching societal effect".
The video group worked very much like open-channel American systems which have their own cable network. The group endeavoured, however, to avoid a mistake made by American "free access" channels which, in the video group's opinion, "have too abstract a concept of democracy or the wrong idea of creativity". In the USA "just anybody - no matter what he has to say and how he says it - can present his views in an open-channel model". Contrary hereto, the idea in Austria was to concentrate on productions in certain areas, as described, since "video or media activities in general were not supposed to become a purpose in themselves".

Media didactics: A media-didactical and media-critical component developed quite naturally out of the work done with the video medium. The individuals taking part in the production process, for example, gained a natural insight into the workings of television. They also learnt the language of pic-

tures and how that language can be manipulated. It was important to the members of the video group never to present themselves as perfect media specialists or as salesmen of a new ideology. Nevertheless, they did not remain merely neutral observers and by-standers, but rather tried to create a certain amount of problem-awareness by presenting their own views.

Many of the final video productions are only relevant in the light of their specific production process. The video group was nevertheless convinced that some of the productions were quite suitable for broadcasting as a local or regional cable television programme, albeit in excerpts and with suitable adaptation.

Young people make their own programmes

As mentioned, the topic of "young people" played a major role in both of these local television projects. The following therefore presents some examples of programmes produced and conceived by school-children and apprentices. These young people not only handled the camera and the cutting work, but also conducted the interviews and developed their own concept. Nevertheless, the video group provided constant assistance and criticism in producing the tapes, encouraged further discussions or public screenings, and provided technical support.

Some examples of video productions:

- School-children who made a film about their village (the village of Antau in Burgenland):
  This programme was produced by a group of 13 to 14-year-old comprehensive school pupils. They conducted spontaneous interviews in the street, asking villagers and the mayor for their opinion. Particular reference was made to the problem of merging the village with another, quite distant community, as this would give the children a long way to

school. The final tape, edited to a length of 45 minutes, was then screened in a pub. It was so popular that the pub was overcrowded. A heated discussion finally took place after the screening.

- A group of girls (15 to 17 years) who made interviews on equal rights:
  In street interviews, the girls discussed this subject with old and young, conservative and progressive passers-by.

-"Homo Consumens" - a video film about consumer society:
  A critical contribution on consumption and social differences in our society, produced by 6 pupils between 17 and 19 years of age. Among other things, this production comprises a spontaneous discussion among young people in a discotheque on consumption and abstention.

- The Mattersburg children's playground:
  Two 13-year-old girls produced a video tape on the playground problem of more than 200 children living in a high-rise building, who only had an asphalt surface in front of the block to play on. One of the girls interviewed the children, people living in the block, and, finally, the mayor of the community (Mattersburg in Burgenland, 5,200 inhabitants). The mayor gave the children his permission to draw a plan for the playground themselves. The video production shows how the children developed this plan together. The plan was then submitted to the mayor and he promised, in front of the video camera, to have the playground built exactly according to the children's ideas.

- Karli, 15-years-old, a spastic:
  Karli can only walk with crutches and has considerable speech difficulties. Nevertheless, he is very intelligent and was the best in his form at his special school. The video group started out by filming Karli at home, and then interviewed his aunt and sister. Then Karli conducted some interviews himself and filmed his surroundings. The re-

cognition he got through this video activity encouraged him in his development. The tape was shown to job counsellors at the labour office, who were amazed by Karli's abilities and the special way the production had been made.

- A young boy with considerable speech difficulties is also presented on a tape about Willi, another spastic. This video tape was produced by members of a youth club near Graz (Steiermark). To make a living, Willi Huber sells newspapers in Graz. A post office official interviewed him on the special problems of disabled persons.

What can video do?

The most important objective of the Austrian group in using video is to encourage "interaction and communication between various persons and groups ... on a local and regional level". The second objective is to distribute these video programmes through open channels, ie via a mass medium that "allows communication among numerous groups".

Video thus serves a twofold purpose: First, as a means of "self-articulation, self-recognition, and as a mirror of the environment", and, second, as a means of communication and an instrument for reaching the public. Whenever video is able to encourage communication on problems, which otherwise would not have been initiated, it also acts as an "instrument of social learning" and may even become a means and tool for organizing and enforcing interests.

In the eyes of the group, video means "to produce programmes in small, unhierarchic, and clearly-defined groups". Another concept is that "video represents the de-specialization and de-mystification of audio-visual technologies".

A special point about the "local television" project in Austria is that it involved rural, small-town, and large-town environments. As the first studies have also revealed, citizens in all of these areas were interested in participating in the activity.

"Videoinitiative Graz e.V."

The members of "Videoinitiative Graz" (VIG), which has been in existence since 1975, made a major contribution to the two "local television" projects. (Several video groups operating in Austria had joined forces in this project.)

VIG in Graz now operates in its own studio and still uses video after the conclusion of the local television project. It is organized as a public-interest association and is supported both by the Town of Graz, by the State of Steiermark, and by the Federal Government. The group is now also able to provide some of its own funding through video productions it has made. As an example, it works on behalf of the "Büro für Bürgerinitiativen", and compiles video documentaries on cultural events, as well as organizing video seminars. VIG is already known and established as a permanent institution in Graz and will be further promoted in the course of the next few years by the State of Steiermark.

ITALY

A general survey of the media situation in Italy:

Currently, the information and communication sector in Italy is undergoing far-reaching changes. The state broadcasting monopoly, which, for more than 30 years, was characterized by the uninterrupted domination of the Christian Democratic Party, has started to shake. The demand for decentralization and democratization of the traditional media structures, which became evident for the first time in 1968 during the workers' and students' movements, is now reflected by the Broadcasting Act passed in April 1975. Following the legalization of private cable television initiatives, as set forth by the Broadcasting Act, and as a consequence of the efforts made in particular by extra-parliamentary leftist groups at establishing a large counter-public, numerous independent radio and television stations have been opened all over the country.

The current media situation is as follows: More than 1,000 private radio stations and between 300 and 400 television stations now air their own programmes. The frequencies available for local stations have already been exhausted. Although the stations are not subject to any legal provisions or regulations, there is a draft act which will be submitted to Parliament after the current governmental crisis has been overcome. Its intention is to make certain financial and technical requirements of the existing initiatives.

Video work in Italy - the current situation

The Italian video movement started on a broad scale in 1972. Groups were established sporadically, and most of the work done was based on individual - mainly political - projects. Before the video groups were properly organized, however, the video scene was curtailed in its independent development by the numerous radio and television stations that started

shooting up out of the ground virtually overnight (and which were still illegal at the time). Since then, video activities have been few and far between; they have been project-orientated and limited to the initiative taken by individual persons and institutions. Not even the regional cultural institutions, with the video activities they have initiated, have been able to change this overall situation.

The current video scene, as perceived by the neutral observer, involves the following major applications:

A. Video as a means of production with commercial television stations

B. Video as a means of societal analysis
   - on behalf of regional institutions and cultural organisations
   - as the initiative of independent groups and film makers

A. Video as a means of production with commercial television stations

Currently, there are roughly 300 to 400 private television stations in Italy. Since new stations are being opened all the time and existing ones are being closed down, it is impossible to state the exact figure.

Connoisseurs of the scene regard 98 per cent of these stations as absolutely commercial.
Most of them are organized and set up in the form of joint-stock companies. Local publishers, advertising agencies, and parties often have a considerable share in these companies' stocks. Programmes are usually produced by the companies themselves on a low budget. These stations attract their audience by broadcasting feature films, and there are stations which, like cinemas, show the same film

several times in the course of one single day. Most of these private stations broadcast their programmes in colour.

EXAMPLE: Video Bologna
Via Casiglione 21
40 124 Bologna

The Video Bologna television station (which is set up as a joint-stock company) was established on June 1, 1977. The majority of shares is held by

- the newspaper "Il Resto del Carlino"
- the advertising company SPE

The company appoints its own programme director and draws its income through advertising.

Programmes usually start at 7.00 pm. 40 per cent of the films broadcast are purchased productions. 30 advertising spots with an average length of 30 seconds are broadcast daily. SPE procures the advertising customers and accounts. Out of the total staff of 20 employees, 11 are responsible for technical operations, three are secretaries, and three are announcers. The editorial and production staff is provided by the newspaper "Il Resto del Carlino".

Most of the employees only work for the station on a part-time basis and have another job elsewhere. According to information provided by the station, the programmes of Video Bologna have an audience of one million viewers. The 60 per cent of its total programming which the station makes itself is all on video.

B. Video as a means of societal analysis

1) On behalf of regional institutions and cultural organisations

Under the working hypothesis that video is in a position to sensitize the public at large for the problems and the significance of information and communication, various

regions and organisations, in particular the Emilia-Romagna region and national cultural organisations, and above all the ARCI and the "Federazione Italiana Cine-Club", have given a lot of attention to the alternative media sector. By running courses on the organisation and operation of RAI, by analysing the contents of conventional broadcasting programmes, and by conducting practical video experiments, these regional institutions have endeavoured to promote the development of "basic units". A "basic unit" is in each case made up by a specific sub-group within society, e.g. at schools, factories, universities, within the health system, or in the army. The task and purpose of these groups is to ensure an intensive flow of communication.

There is a direct connection beteen these groups and the current effort to introduce a democratic reform of broadcasting. The aim is to establish a connection between these basic units integrated in social reality and the production units operating within the state broadcasting services. In this context, the basic units are to serve primarily as the "suppliers" of information, while the production units have more of a coordinating and executive function.

A step in this direction:

From early May until the end of July 1973, the Emilia-Romagna region held a number of seminars and experiments using video equipment under the title of: "In support of democratic application of information and communication means".
A total of 29 groups were formed in the course of this project. Each group compiled its own operations plan and developed programme guidelines for video implementation.

In the production of problem-orientated tapes by these groups, the main objective was to ensure the participation of as many people as possible, and not to reach a high standard of technical perfection. Particular emphasis

was given to the aspect of animation by combining the contents and the technical production work. The major concern of the producers, therefore, was the production process, and not the final product.

PROCESS

This is a relatively unusual attempt, in comparison with other countries, made by a regional institution to initiate a communication project with broad involvement of the public at large. When distributing the tapes, which were screened in various parts of town, in factories, at schools, and at small parties, each of the groups was able to reach a total of 400 to 2,500 viewers.

A further step:

Only recently, the Emilia-Romagna region passed a law providing for the establishment of so-called "polyvalent centres". The plan is to modify existing cultural centres and libraries, and to turn them into media centres. The region has provided a substantial budget for the development and execution of these projects.

The FICC, Italy's National Film Club Federation, also emphasizes the animating aspect inherent in its video work. The FICC has a large number of portable 1/2" videosets. One of FICC's employees in Rome comments as follows on the Federation's activities:

> "We use video chiefly as a medium for making people acquainted with ways and means of visual expression. In using the medium, it is our objective to document and discuss reality, and to determine mistakes. We are not so interested in the final product - which is erased quite soon."

2) As the initiative of independent groups and film makers

Although it is very difficult to generalize on the work done by independent video groups, they do have some points

in common as regards their objectives, their project activities, and their origins.
An interesting and striking point is the number of film makers who now use video in their productions. Alberto Griffi, Alfredo Leonardi, Guido Lombardi, for example, belonged to the militant cinema and made underground films before they started working with video.

Within the general trend towards greater political awareness and as a result of the discussion on traditional information media, the wish for alternative means of communication started developing in 1968.

Very many groups were then established between 1972 and 1974. There was a lot of enthusiasm about alternative information, and many ideas were put forward. There were also many plans to establish videotheques, set up archives, and open central clearing houses, in order to overcome the monopoly of the national information media and the increasing concentration in the publishing industry.

The project of a video channel, however, that was discussed in 1968, has so far not materialized in any concrete form. The independent video groups still operate in splendid isolation.

EXAMPLE Videobase
Via Satrico 1 a
Roma

Anna Lajolo, Guido Lombardi, and Alfredo Leonardi have been working together in Rome since 1971 under the title of "Videobase".

All of them had their own audio-visual experience before they started cooperating.
Since 1971, the group has produced some 200 video tapes.
It operates with 1/2" black and white videosets.

An example of Videobase's projects: L'Isola dell'Isola"

This programme was made and recorded in the Ligurian community of Carloforte on S. Pietro island near Sardinia. The subject was selected and executed in the light of two objectives:

- First, to activate a flow of communication and information within a relatively autonomous and secluded community, and
- second, to give the island's population a possibility of relating their problems directly to the audience without a journalist intervening, thus conveying a picture absolutely in line with reality on the island.

To reach these objectives, Videobase required not only the suitable production means but also a special rapport between the producers and the inhabitants of the island. Using portable video cameras turned out to be a very suitable way of approaching events and the people living on the island, while at the same time minimizing the amount of intervention. The possibility of constantly re-screening, re-discussing and adding to individual sequences of the recordings guaranteed that the final product had the approval of all the participants and persons involved.

In intervals of three years, the Videobase team spent one month on the island in order to minimize the apprehension of the inhabitants of Carloforte as regards the medium and the work done by the group. During the first month, the Videobase team tried to get an idea of social and economic life on the island and to put down that idea in sound and pictures, in order to see what kind of life the inhabitants led. A first synthesis of this work was then screened in Carloforte and the town of Portascusa on the coast of Sardinia in June 1977 in the form of a 90-minute tape. The objective of these frequent screenings was to record (again on video) the criticism, additions, and response of the persons involved, and to determine possible changes since the first

visit.

When the Videobase team went to the island the second time, they once again recorded 10 hours of material. Finally, the entire footage covering a total of 24 hours was reduced to 90 minutes, the final product, a synthesis of two months' work on S. Pietro, being broadcast by RAI in March 1978.

The role of the mass media in the Third World

Many of the numerous theories for "modernizing" the Third World give the mass media a crucial role in this process. A scientific school established in the USA in the late 50's, for example, regarded the rapid development of the mass media as "changing agents" as a possibility of allowing the developing countries to change over into Western style industrial societies.

This concept, which paved the way for numerous Third World media projects, was subjected to fundamental criticism in the 70's. Inspired by the ideas of Paolo Freire and Ivan Illich, two Latin American educators, the responsible authorities conducted a thorough analysis of mass media contents in the developing countries. In the process, communication researchers found that the newspapers and broadcasting services reflected almost exclusively the views of the ruling elites. The "Westernization" of the media in the Third World (by advertising and numerous foreign programmes) was strongly criticised and classified as inadequate or even hazardous to the educational and developmental objectives of the rural population.

Studies on local media projects tailored to a definite segment within the rural population, also showed that in nearly all cases the groups which derived the greatest profit from media education programmes were those groups which, within the rural population, were already privileged thanks to their education and socio-economic status ("communications-effects gap").

Taking this as a basis, Latin American researchers, following the concepts developed by Freire, developed a new theoretical concept. This concept is based on aspects such as decentralization, free dialogue, participation of the population, and feedback. Another essential aspect is to reach a large

sector of the population via media in the form of non-formal education, ie those people who, for many reasons, are excluded from the formal education system.

The application of video in the Third World

Video was discovered as a medium for the Third World in the early 70's. The first projects were developed spontaneously and unsystematically. Groups that had already worked with video in the industrialized countries imported the medium into the Third World and started their experiments there.

For budget reasons, television stations in developing countries also started using the video technology. Some of the programmes in the Indian SITE Project (1976), the first satellite television project in the Third World, were also produced by video.

In the following, however, reference will only be made to the use of video as an independent, local medium operating outside television organisations.

The very positive experience gained with a media project on the Fogo Islands (Newfoundland) certainly encouraged, and perhaps even initiated, the activities of video groups in the Third World. Films were used as a communication process medium on the Fogo Islands in 1968 in order to initiate a better rapport between the fishermen living on the islands and the provincial government. This made the inhabitants aware of their problems and prompted them to make certain demands, some of which were fulfilled.

A recent UNESCO study provides an initial rundown of video projects in the Third World. It shows, for example, that video has been or is used for non-formal education in the following countries:

- Children's welfare (Egypt and Gambia)
- Family planning/ health (Egypt, Bangla Desh, Gambia, Iran, Jamaica, Columbia, Philippines, Thailand)

- Agricultural development	(Bangla Desh, Gambia, India, Upper Volta, Sri Lanka, Tunesia)
- Cooperatives	(Chile - discontinued after the military coup in 1973, Upper Volta)
- Literacy	(Egypt)
- Training	(India - for agricultural trainers, Thailand - for midwives)
- Urban development	(Pakistan)

The individual projects are funded and executed along many different lines. Some, such as a major project on the Philippines, are funded and conducted with the support of UNESCO. All of the projects, however, are based on a common assumption - that video opens up communication channels, describes reality, tears down barriers, and allows the population to become involved in the medium.

Individual project descriptions

Many of the video projects conducted so far in the Third World have simply concentrated on passing on information to the rural population. The aspect of participation was therefore neglected in most cases. In the following, however, we would like to describe in somewhat greater detail two ambitious projects which concentrated intentionally on active population participation: The "Tanzania Year 16 Project", one of the first video experiments conducted in the Third World, and a video experiment in India. Both of these projects indicate the strengths and weaknesses of video work in the developing countries.

The "Tanzania Year 16 Project"

The TY 16 Project was conducted by an international television team. Although it was financed by international funds, the responsible organizing authority was the Tanzanian government. The project was started in 1971, lasted for 15 months, and, contrary to the original plans, was not continued.

Objectives

1. By using video, the rural population were to be given an opportunity to articulate their needs and communicate their experiences.
2. Video was intended to create a dialogue between villages, the responsible authorities, and urban centres (such as universities).
3. The material thus provided on aspects of rural development was to serve a twofold purpose in improving urban/rural communication and supporting the cause of education and political activation.

Project realization

The team lived and worked in three villages. It spoke the natives' language. Thanks to its good knowledge of the overall situation in Tanzania, the team was quickly able to grasp the peasants' problems and establish good contacts with the population. The team also felt that the current socialist - cooperative development ("Ujamaa") was conducive to the project.

The technical equipment consisted of three portable, self-powered video recorders, cameras, and several monitors.

The team concentrated entirely on events important to the inhabitants in their specific situation. An example:

> Thanks to its good work, one of the villages had won some prize money. The authorities said the villagers should use the money to build a cow-shed, although the peasants disagreed. Finally, the shed turned out to be a failure because mosquitos and the lack of water made any attempt at cattle-breeding absolutely impossible. A tape was then made to document this outcome of bureaucracy, and shown to the authorities and students of agriculture. Their response and their opinions

were then, in turn, shown to the rural population by video. The objective in the process was to encourage mutual understanding and active cooperation.

Comment

Although the TY 16 Project is among the best-known video experiments conducted in the Third World and has even become something of a legend thanks to the team's publications, one must be careful in attaching specific values to the Project. The first unclear point, for example, is why the Project was discontinued. In addition, although the reports on this 15-month activity sound very promising, there has been no scientific evaluation of the more than 200 hours of footage.

The Saharanpur Project (India)

The video experiment conducted by the Centre for Development of Instructional Technology (CENDIT) in several villages in the Saharanpur District (Federal State of Uttar Pradesh) in 1974 and 1975, was, for all practical purposes, the result of an emergency situation. The original task of the CENDIT team was to develop a media strategy for a family planning project. The team showed the village inhabitants several 16-mm films on family planning and agricultural innovations. Feedback studies revealed, however, that the films had no effect on the population. Out of disappointment regarding this failure, the team then started experimenting with video.

Objectives

Since the experiment was thus quite spontaneous, the project was not based on a specific plan developed in advance. (This is why the results - as the CENDIT team confirms - should not be over-interpreted.) The team's intention was to reverse the usual direction of communication by helping the villagers to present their views and problems via video, after which there was to be a common discussion.

Project realization

The first step was to make the villagers acquainted with the video equipment. For this purpose, the team gave them the possibility of producing their own tapes on their everyday life. One of the first tapes produced presented the problems of peasants without any land of their own, complaining in a discussion about major land-owners and the authorities. Later, this tape was shown to some of the land-owners. Another tape was produced by the villagers in cooperation with the team on the subject of family planning. The two groups discussed the subject and blamed the authorities for the failure of various family planning projects. While CENDIT wanted to play this tape to the local authorities and produce another tape showing their response, the authorities refused to participate.

Results

Following the disappointment it had experienced with the film medium, the CENDIT team regarded its video experiments as "a completely new dimension of possibilities". The team was surprised itself on how active the villagers were in their participation. The team also felt that video met the local needs in the area far more than the conventional form of television - and was even convinced that video, thanks to its ease in use, would be the best means of communication for the "simple people" (without their own possessions and power) within the population.

Reference was also made, however, to the medium's limitations: Video, it was said, can merely analyse problems. It is up to the authorities to take the necessary steps to eliminate poverty and social discrimination. If, therefore, the authorities do not cooperate, video may only cause false hopes and general frustration among the population.

Comment

Video application is still largely in an experimental phase in the Third World. Since scientific studies on the individual projects have not yet been carried out, one should refrain from making over-optimistic statements and forecasts. Video, as a medium, invariably rests within a certain political environment and can only reach as far as the authorities and decision-makers will let it go. As in the case of India, forms of participation planned by video workers are often doomed to fail as a result of the existing political power structure.

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Global Village
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